

# MONTANA NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 6683  
Great Falls, MT 59406-6683

## MINUTES OF MEETING BUSINESS SESSION 43<sup>rd</sup> GENERAL CONFERENCE 2000

HELD: 8 APRIL 2000

**CALL TO ORDER** The Business Session of the Montana National Guard Association's 43<sup>rd</sup> General Conference was called to order by President (Lieutenant Colonel) J. Peter Hronek at 0900 hours, Saturday, April 8, at the Heritage Inn, Great Falls, Montana.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was rendered. The invocation was given.

**APPOINTMENT OF SERGEANT AT ARMS** Captain Mark Bordman and Second Lieutenant Larry Gardner were appointed as Sergeants at Arms.

**APPOINTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARIAN** Major Jim Moran was appointed as Parliamentarian.

**APPOINTMENT OF NOMINATIONS COMMITTEES FOR BOARD VACANCIES** Brigadier General Randy Mosley was appointed to form a committee to nominate three directors on the army side and a candidate for vice president. Brigadier General Frank Tobel was appointed to form a committee to nominate a candidate for one director on the air side.

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS** The keynote address was given by Mr. Chris Small, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired), Legislative Director, National Guard Association of the United States. NGAUS works because of its many members through which we are able to leverage our power. We are presently working on a membership strategy to increase membership. Despite the many attempts to cut Guard funding, 58 Senators told the secretary of defense that the Guard was not going to be cut. This action is directly linked to the link our membership has with Congress.

Two billion dollars has been added to the Guard this year. This is the largest increase in 11 years. Full time manning has been increased - the first time in 10 years.

The Guard is the reserve component for the armed forces. We have more units, missions and people than any other reserve component. The Guard is receiving more money for equipment than any other reserve component. There is currently pending a proposal to make each of the directors of the Army National Guard and Air National Guard a three star general authorized by the Senate. This would increase our organizations' influence even more.

The reserve dental program has been authorized for family members. The Senate has authorized a thrift savings plan for the reserve although no matching funds have yet been provided. There has been an increase from 50 to 62 million dollars for the Youth Challenge Program. The Senate has authorized reserve enlistment bonuses for 3, 4 and 5 year enlistments as well as increased the amount of bonuses to \$8,000.00 in some cases. The ARNG budget is the largest ever. The Air budget, while providing 362 million for procurement of new aircraft, fell short of what was needed.

The priorities for 2001 include increasing full time manning in the ARNG, construction increases and real property maintenance. The procurement priorities for the Army include more Blackhawk helicopters. For the Air the priorities are F-16's, C-130's and engine upgrades and kits.

Joint priorities include tax incentives for employees, the extension of VA loans, more resources for counter drug efforts and distance learning.

The future looks promising for the Guard.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** The minutes for the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Conference were presented. A motion to approve the minutes was seconded and unanimously approved.

**TREASURER'S REPORT** Major Tom Mora reported that an audit of the Association's records indicated a \$233.75 net positive change from January 1, 1999 through January 31, 1999. The Association's books were audited in accordance with General Accounting Principles and conform to those standards. Major Ireland has done a phenomenal job in record keeping and accounting for the organization.

Major Jim Oehmcke reported that insurance income was up slightly over the year prior. The bottom line is that the Association is \$233.75 in the black, with a year ending balance of \$8452.97 for 1999. Major Oehmcke reviewed the 2000 budget for the Association.

A motion was made to approve the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT** Lieutenant Colonel Steve Mehring reported that the executive director's position was first held temporarily by Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Collins and now Lieutenant Colonel Mehring. Lieutenant Colonel Mehring reported that the executive

director takes care of the day to day activities of the Association. He has worked to improve communications between the Association and its members. Day to day administrative tasks and taking care of correspondence with NGAUS are among his activities. The executive director is not the president or even a board member. He has no vote. The position does not supplant the role of any other position. He encourages all members to provide him their e-mail addresses so that they may receive more information as to what is going on in and with the Association. Lieutenant Colonel Mehring then gave a demonstration of the Association's web page which shows all board members and directors and their terms, e-mail addresses and the composition of various committees. It also includes access to Association minutes and agendas. Information on the latest state conference is provided, including biographies of speakers.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Resolutions Report:** Brigadier General (Retired) Hindoien presented the resolutions pending before NGAUS that are recommended to be supported by Montana. It was moved, seconded and approved that the following NGAUS resolutions be specifically supported by the Association:

### JOINT

- A-4: Relating to full-time support requirements
- A-5: Relating to full-time support manning
- A-6: Relating to military health benefits for retired reservists through medicare subvention or extend tricare enrollment
- A-13: Relating to increased support for the employer support of the guard and reserve (ESGR) initiatives and incentive programs

### ARMY

- B-1: Relating to modernization
- B-13: Relating to the modernization of the ARNG Bradley fighting vehicle fleet to the M2A2 "Operation Desert Strom (ODS)" variant
- B-26: Relating to the need to fully resource and procure to the documented requirement in all ARNG utility helicopter units with the UH-60L
- B-27: Relating to the need to re-manufacture the UH-60 aircraft to the UH-60L+ configuration in order to provide these re-manufactured UH-60L's to the Army

### AIR

- C-1: Relating to ANG structure
- C-2: Relating to the procurement of new production Block 52 F-16 Aircraft for the ANG fighter force
- C-3: Relating to precision attack targeting system (PATs) for F-16's

Brigadier General Hindoien then discussed two other areas of interest that are being monitored. One is a proposed resolution to allow Title 32 retirees to have VA benefits. The other is a resolution by the State of Minnesota to allow payroll deductions for NGAUS dues.

**By-Laws Report:** Major Boettger discussed the various proposed by-laws amendments submitted to the membership for approval. The biggest change being proposed deals with the creation of an executive director position for the Association. The proposed amendments in the following by-laws were moved, seconded and unanimously approved:

Preface: (Addition of reference to 43<sup>rd</sup> General Conference)

Article I, Section 1: (Typographical change)

Article II, Section 6: (1 year complementary membership for new officers and warrant officers)

Article III, Section 4: (Addition of reference to executive director); Section 5 (Addition of warrant officer as a required member of board)

Article IV, Section 1: (Addition of reference to executive director; stipends for secretary and treasurer; expenditures by executive director); Section 3 (Creation of executive director position; stipend for executive director); Section 4 (Addition of executive director); Section 5 (Stipends paid at discretion of board subject to financial condition of Association)

Article VI, Section 1: (Addition of reference to executive director)

Article VIII, Section 1: (Notification of amendments to membership by written summary with full text on Web site)

**Legislative Report:** The legislative report was presented by Brigadier General Tobel. Those resolutions that were passed by the Association last year were sent to the NGAUS conference. Those that passed there were established as legislative priorities. The key resolutions dealt with military health care and new procurement.

On the State side two pieces of legislation are being sponsored. The first concerns post secondary education benefits for guard members. This program was funded in the amount of \$250,000.00 for the current biennium. This equates to a \$500.00 per semester scholarship for qualified applicants. The goal is to increase this funding to \$300,000.00 for the next biennium.

The second item sponsored is a proposal for distinct National Guard license plates for retired members.

Brigadier General Tobel also reported on ongoing lobbying efforts to encourage the legislature to assist the Department of Military Affairs - including the Youth Challenge Program. Montana provided \$1,600,000.00 as the State's share for this program. Roger Larson and John Nugent were commended for their lobbying efforts for these and other projects.

**Membership Report:** The membership report was presented by Lieutenant Colonel Collins. Lieutenant Colonel Collins reported that membership is the key to national legislation. At the national level, everything we do is touched by NGAUS.

In regard to the National Program:

1. Dues have been frozen until 2002. However, because of this we need a minimum 70% state membership participation. If we do not obtain this then national dues will have to be increased.
2. Complimentary memberships are given for new officers.
3. Early bird rebate. If a state pays 70, 80 or 90 percent of its dues by February 28 of each year, that state's association receives a 3, 4 or 5 percent rebate accordingly.
4. Marketing tools. We need to inform our members of the benefits they have and receive because of the state and national associations. Brochures on benefits, posters and similar tools help us get this information out.

Current status: The Association needs 338 paid up dues to have 100% participation. This year to date about 56% of the Army has paid its dues and 67% of the Air. Overall, Montana is at 58.5%.

The 100% dues participation awards for this year go to 1-190th Field Artillery Battalion (year 2000); the 495<sup>th</sup> Transportation Battalion (year 2000); and the 1-189th Aviation Battalion (year 1999).

**Company Grade Report:** Captain Lincoln presented the Company Grade report. Captain Lincoln emphasized the need to have the caucus become more active as a group. The Board was asked to consider offering professional development credits (for retirement credit) as an additional incentive for company grade officers to attend the next general conference meeting.

**Insurance Report:** Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Remick gave the insurance report. Lieutenant Colonel Remick reported that the insurance revenue to the two Associations last year was \$10,500.00. One-half of this amount went to the officers association and one-half to the enlisted association. This was our best year ever. The insurance income is almost one-half of our budget income. As of July 1 our insurance program should get better. At that time, due to national legislation requiring reserves for term insurance policies of 5 years or more, insurance rates in the industry should generally increase. However, because our program is not affected by this requirement our rates will stay the same and should be very competitive.

**Scholarship Report:** The scholarship report was presented by Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) John Nugent. Lieutenant Colonel Nugent reported that the Thrift Shop continues to generate money for scholarships. On the Army side, Montana has met the goal of having \$1,000,000.00 of tuition assistance in state. The Air side is working on a tuition assistance system as well. HB-2 provided \$250,000.00 for scholarships. We are optimistic that we can increase this.

The \$500.00 scholarship was awarded this year to Stacy Ann Stricker.

**CHALLENGE PROGRAM.** This program was funded by the State legislature. We would like to propose sponsoring an award for a deserving student each cycle of the program. We would like to get the enlisted association's support as well. Lieutenant Colonel Harrington moved that the MTNGA establish a meritorious scholarship to be awarded each cycle to a deserving graduate of the Montana Youth Challenge Program. The scholarship shall be in the amount of \$250.00. The total annual awards shall not exceed \$750.00. Criteria for the award shall be established by the scholarship committee and the director of the Youth Challenge Program. The initial scholarship may be awarded commencing with the next Youth Challenge graduation in June of 2000. The motion was seconded by Major Fox and unanimously approved.

**ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND VICE PRESIDENT** Brigadier General Mosley presented the following nominations to fill Army vacancies on the Board of Directors: Chief Warrant Officer 4 Joseph Yuricic; Lieutenant Colonel John Jackson; Major John Swanson. Lieutenant Colonel Loren Oelkers was nominated for vice president. A motion to approve the nominations was seconded and passed unanimously.

Brigadier General Tobel presented the name of Second Lieutenant Larry Gardner as the Air side's nomination for director to fill the sole Air vacancy on the Board. A motion to approve the nomination was seconded and passed unanimously.

**1999 NGAUS REPORT** Major Tom Mora presented the report. Major Mora attended the 121<sup>st</sup> National Conference in Atlanta. Over 7000 members attended. Topics included Guard contributions to the "Total Force"; the Youth Challenge Program; and, the Rapid Reaction Teams. The Expeditionary Aerospace Force (EAF) has improved support and increased stability for its members. In the area of recruiting and retention, the Army guard was praised for doing more with less. The Air was praised for performing their role in augmenting the active force.

**2000 NGAUS REPORT** Lieutenant Colonel Mehring gave the report. The 2000 NGAUS Conference will be held September 12-14, 2000 in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Good rooms have already been reserved. Everyone is encouraged to attend. Numerous activities are planned. NGAUS will pay for some expenses for a company grade officer. The Association normally pays registration fees and one-half of the room costs for 10 delegates. Military air transportation may be authorized.

**ARMY BRIEF** Brigadier General Randy Mosley gave the Army brief. "Transformation" is the buzz word. There have been many changes in the last 12 months. In the last 5 years the whole force structure has changed. More emphasis has been given to combat support. Our end strength last year was 2864. We deployed to Nicaragua last year on a humanitarian

mission providing dental and medical assistance as well as construction assistance in that country.

The amount of \$7,000,000.00 has been spent in the last 5 years on construction. In aviation we have new facilities for training. A Regional Training Center is to be built soon. Plans are underway to increase our education/training at remote locations. The Youth Challenge Program has been a real success. The key challenge is maintaining manning. Last year losses exceeded gains in recruitment of enlisted and officer personnel. This trend must be turned around.

**AIR BRIEF** Brigadier General Tobel gave the Air brief. Between Headquarters, Red Horse and the Fighter Wing we have a total of 1014 people with an authorized strength of 1082 equating to 94% manning. Red Horse continues to be very busy. They will be undergoing an ORI this year. The 120<sup>th</sup> FW continues to process through the conversion from air defense to a general purpose mission. We will be getting the F-16C model beginning this year and phasing out the A model. This transition will bring the capability of delivering precision guided munitions. The 120<sup>th</sup> is planning a major training deployment at Volk Field, Wisconsin to include 12 airplanes and approximately 500 personnel.

**CLOSING COMMENTS** Lieutenant Colonel Hronek reported that the next state general conference is tentatively scheduled for 27-29 April, 2000 at Chico Hot Springs. The conference will be sponsored by the 1-190 Field Artillery Battalion.

Open items at this time include the status of our relationship with the Enlisted Association. It is in everyone's interests that our Associations work together. We are considering having the 2002 conference in conjunction with the Enlisted Association conference. We are also tentatively planning to have the 2003 conference in early February in Helena in order to have more impact on the legislature.

**BENEDICTION** The benediction was given.

**ADJOURN** There being no further business, the Montana National Guard Association's 43<sup>rd</sup> General Conference meeting was adjourned at 1330 hours.

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**J. Peter Hronek**  
Lieutenant Colonel, MT ANG  
President